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MINUTES

OF THE

NINETY-FIFTH ANNUAL SESSION

OF THE

Original Bear Creek Primitive Baptist Association

Held with Lawyer Springs Church,
Anson County, N. C.
November 5 and 6, 1927

OFFICERS

Elder O. C. Mullis, Moderator, Unionville, N. C.
H. M. Baucom, Clerk, Peachland, N. C.

Next session will convene
Friday, Saturday and Fourth Sunday in
August, 1928.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE

ORIGINAL BEAR CREEK PRIMTIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

Held with Lawyer Springs Church, Saturday and First Sunday, November 5 and 6, 1927.

The Introductory discourse was preached by Elder C. H. White, text John 1:1-8. Followed by Elder Lee Hanks of Marietta Association, Ga., text John 3:3-8.

The church went into conference by electing Elder O. C. Mullis, Moderator. Prayer by Elder Mullis.

Invited all members of our faith and order to seats. The following members being present took seats with us:

Pleasant Grove—T. A. Helms, W. B. Helms, B. F. Mills, J. M. Williams, Elder J. F. Mills, Lonnie Griffin, Charlie Mullis, Sisters Tiny Little, Dora Griffin, Wilma Williams, Ollie Tice.

Watson—Elder O. C. Mullis, Troy Simpson, Preston Helm and wife and others.

High Hill—Sisters M. E. Helms, J. M. Bagwell and others.

High Ridge—J. H. Ashcraft, Sister Lou Carpenter, B. Williams and wife.

Appointed committees:

On Preaching—Brethren C. P. Griffin, E. C. Jones and Troy Simpson.

On Contributions—Elder C. H. White, J. T. Simpson, J. H. Ashcraft and V. P. Helms.

To Write Corresponding Letter—Elders J. F. Mills, C. H. White, O. C. Mullis, Brethren V. P. Helms and F. L. Baucom.

Agreed to have 1000 copies of these minutes printed.

On motion, unanimously adopted Corresponding Letter.

On motion agreed to hold the next meeting of the Association with the Church at Watson, Friday, Saturday and fourth Sunday in August, 1928.

Adjourned in order.

ELDER O. C. MULLIS, Moderator.
H. M. BAUCOM, Clerk.

ORDER OF PREACHING

Saturday A. M.—Elder C. H. White.
Saturday A. M.—Elder Lee Hanks.
Saturday P. M.—Elder J. R. Wilson.
Sunday A. M.—Elder Lee Hanks.
Sunday A. M.—Elder J. R. Wilson.
Benediction by Elder J. F. Mills.

NAMES AND ADDRES

Elder J. F. Mills, Marshville, N.
Elder Henry Taylor, Monroe, N.
Elder O. C. Mullis, Unionville, N.
Elder C. H. White, Wadesboro, N.

CIRCULAR-LETTER

The Original Bear Creek Primitive Baptist Association to all Orthodox Primitive Baptists, Greeting: Dearly Beloved in the Lord: We are glad to state that our churches are in peace and sweet fellowship abounds. We are satisfied with the grand old doctrine of grace upon which our churches were constituted and for which we have ever contended to this good hour.

With sadness of heart we mention the departures of a number of our brethren who have left the sacred principles for which we all stood, when peace and fellowship sweetly abounded up to two years ago. They have formed an alliance with a people holding to heresies that we cannot fellowship and which they would not until recently—and by so doing they have become guilty by toleration. The cause of our separation is absolute Predestination of all things which they tolerate.

W. L. Parker, "Defense of Truth," page 13, says: "This doctrine (absolute Predestination of all things) gradually crept eastward until the year 1915, when it was introduced in the Pig River Association by Elder W. I. Carnell (an excluded absoluter) from the state of Ohio and J. C. Hurst of Roanoke, Va., and it was tolerated and advocated by others. But it was opposed by Elders J. R. Wilson and A. B. Philpot. * * * Elder J. R. Wilson was, on that occasion, sent as a messenger to represent the Mayo Association and he was received and seated, but later he was called in question and unseated because of his opposition to Elders W. I. Carnell and J. C. Hurst on their doctrine of Absolute Predestination of all things and the non-resurrection of the body." Later the Pig River Association rejected the Bible doctrine as set forth in the writings of Elders Washburn and Jackson, said Association also received and recognized as churches the expelled members from Leatherwood and Martinsville Churches, which is gross disorder. The excluded also entered lawsuits for church property in violation of (I Cor. 6:1). Same was repeated at Dan River Church, the excluded members being recognized as churches by the Association ("Defense of Truth," pages 35, 42, 72-78). Such procedure is gross disorder and unscriptural and unbaptistic.

H. F. McGhee of the Pig River Association says: "Many and many times I have heard others use the expression, Absolute Predestnation of all things and preach things that are embraced in that expression."—"Defense of Truth," page 22.

W. L. Foster says: "I have heard G. F. Dyer preach that fatalistic doctrine many times. I have heard several others preach that same doctrine." Page 23.

Fannie L. McGhee says: "The doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things has been a bone of contention in this country for many years. I remember on one occasion at the home of my father—Elder John McGhee—father said to Elder J. D. Cockran, 'If you don't quit preaching that doctrine (absolute predestination of all things) you are going to divide the churches.' Cochran's reply was, 'I long to see that day.' The division here was over the **doctrine** and not any

[illegible] Page 23.

[illegible] about 1920 lined up with that doc-
[illegible]heard an Elder preach at said Asso-
[illegible]ed in "Absolute predestination," for
[illegible]tep we take was fixed in eternity—
[illegible]ved an expelled faction from Dan
[illegible]rder.

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At Staunton River Association, held in Richmond, Va., an Absolute Elder threatened to do personal violence to an Elder who opposed his doctrine of Absolute Predestination of all things. Later Elder B. G. Parker at the Staunton River Association was publicly denounced for his opposition to that heresy. At the same Association a portion of the Association declared non-fellowship for those who opposed their heresy.—"Defense of Truth," Page 39, 7.

Elder J. A. Shaw preached at Staunton River Association, 1921, that God predestinated that Czolgos should kill McKinley, the time and place.—"Defense of Truth," page 7. There was no objection by the Moderator or Elder Spangler, pastor of Danville Church. At this same Association the Absolute element tried to prevent Elders Pittman and Hanks from preaching, because they were not Absoluters. There was no objection to preaching Absoluters by that element. Also, one preaching that the man who killed Dr. Phoff at Ferrum, Va., was the blessed man, because he only did what God predestinated that he should do."—"Defense of Truth," page 39.

The Lone Pilgrim, edited by Elder H. F. Hutchens, published the following, February, 1925: "Now I believe that God absolutely predestinated, determined, decreed and appointed all things, times, events and occurrences that come to pass. * * * God, so to speak, looked down through the channels of time, throughout in time and eternity and moulded the chain of events, from the morning of time, throughout in time and eternity, and there is no changing that chain, for every link was forged and welded in the furnace of God's Wisdom and purpose."—Defense of Truth, page 22.

Did not Elder Hutchens endorse the above? He published it.

Elder H. F. Hutchens, member of Spray Church, said in Lone Pilgrim, August, 1926: "For the Scripture teaches that God has predestined the wicked acts of wicked men." "Defense of Truth," page 66.

Elders Hutchens and Spangler were members at Spray Church. Elder Spangler, pastor of Spray and majority at Danville, Va. Did not Elder Spangler endorse the above heresy by toleration? 1923 Staunton River Association, at Danville, refused to preach Elders Petty and Pittman because they opposed the absolute doctrine, but preached every absoluter and changed an article of faith to make it conform to this doctrine. Those heretical doctrines had been preached and fellowshipped in the Staunton River and Pig River Associations long before the Danville Church trouble, which was a member of the Staunton River Association. doctrine caused the division; Elder Wilson opposed that heresy all the way.

Sister Canady says: "Elder Spangler came to my house on Tuesday before the September meeting, 1923, and cited us to trial, saying that he wanted all members present and all to be faithful, let him stand or fall; that either he or J. R. Wilson would have to come out. I told him that I could not and would not raise a hand against Bro. Wilson for he preached the doctrine that I had always believed."—Bettie Canady, Schoolfield, Va., "Defense of Truth." Pages 18 and 19.

The night of the division in Danville the doctrine of Absolute Predestination was preached, endorsed by the Moderator of the Association and Elder Spangler, pastor of the church.—"Defense of Truth." Pages 8, 18.

Bro. Sam Walton objected to said doctrine and the majority excluded him. Elder J. R. Wilson also objected to their doctrine and

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other departures and the majority rejected him, the minority protesting. This was without labor or trial, which is mob law. No charge preferred against Elder Wilson. The majority of the church stated later that there was a doctrinal difference. Yes, there is no doubt but what some of the church held to absolutism and that sin was necessary to our eternal salvation—eliminating grace. A number present said Elder Wilson did not use abusive language, but it was the doctrine. W. L. Parker, then clerk of Danville Church, says: "On the 29th day of October, following, the church (majority) adopted another resolution in which she did say the doctrine was the cause of a difference between the elders of the association. . . . "The absoluters have taken many positions and contradicted themselves. Elder Wilson is sound and orderly." pp. 15 and 16, 17, 20 and 9.

Again W. L. Parker affirms: "The charge of abusive language was never brought against Elder Wilson in church conference, but, as already stated, it was added after conference closed. I was clerk of the church and lined up with the majority, or absolute element, which was doing these things, and I added the charge myself, being prejudiced against Elder Wilson. With shame I confess my own part of these unholy proceedings." "Defense of Truth." Page 15.

Some churches acted hastily before investigation, which acts were rescinded and all personal wrongs by them and Elder Wilson confessed. The sovereign churches officially and patiently labored with the majority, all of which were ignored. Then the churches, by their committees, investigated the minority who stood with Elder J. R. Wilson and found them and him sound, orthodox and orderly in faith and practice, having paid all they owed, which was rejected; the churches then proceeded to declare the identity of Danville church was with minority and Elder Wilson, who were standing for the faith and practice upon which Danville Church was constituted. Said act was ratified by orthodox sister churches and Elder Wilson has ever since been in full fellowship with the orthodox churches of his country, and at least nine-tenths of the Baptist family.

J. W. Jones, Clerk of Bear Creek Association, held at Howard's Chapel Saturday before first Sunday in May, 1925, made the following statement, which was unanimously endorsed by the Association and visitors present:

At this juncture, Elder J. R. Wilson, who being present, arose and stated that he made a mistake in serving among us before his trouble at Danville had been investigated, which had caused some dissatisfaction and misunderstandings among our people and expressed his sorrow and regret of same and asked for forgiveness, which was unanimously granted. Elders Hanks, Pittman and Cayce, all of whom were present, stated that they fully believed the true identity of the church at Danville was with Elder Wilson and those who stood with him in the trouble there. Then Elder W. F. Pruett arose and stated that possibly he had caused some confusion here in our county and asked to be forgiven, which was granted.

Invited visiting brethren and sisters present from sister associations to seats. Elder J. A. Cave of Senter, and Elder W. C. McMillan of Tennessee, Elder J. M. Royal and wife of Thurmond, N. C., Elders Lee Hanks, M. L. Riner and W. E. Cribbs of Georgia, and Elders R. H. Pittman of Virginia, and C. H. Cayce of Arkansas, Elder C. B. Kilby of Sparta, N. C., and Elders J. T. Lewis, J. S. Lewis and J. R. Wilson of Virginia, Elder W. F. Pruett of Ruffin, N. C., and Elder H. M. Williams and the two brother Bentleys of Silver Creek and

the following brethren and sisters: T. A. Fender and wife of Mountain District; W. S. Shepherd of Mill Branch, and Sister Parris of Burlington, N. C. and brethren Chaney, Hawker and Terry from Virginia were present, seated with us.

At the Bear Creek Association, October 3, 1925, held with High Ridge Church, J. W. Jones, Clerk, stated: "Invited visiting messengers from sister Associations to seats. The following present and welcomed: Elders R. O. Rawlston, of Tennessee; S. G. Candill, of Statesville, N. C.; J. R. Wilson, of Danville, Va.; W. F. Pruett, of Ruffin, N. C. This shows that the Bear Creek Association up to this time were together and had the fellowship and endorsement of the elders and members whose names are mentioned above, and Elders Wilson and Pruett were received by our Association and endorsed ever since the identity of Danville Church was declared by the sovereign churches to be with the minority at Danville, who stand with Elder J. R. Wilson. Resolution adopted by the Association, 1923: "Resolved, that we, the ministers and messengers now present and composing this session of the Baer Creek Primitive Baptist Association, recommend the resolutions sent up to this session by several of our churches, stating that they do not believe that God predestinated sin or the evil acts of men and devils and we advise all of the churches of this Association to adopt such resolutions and also that we advise our churches not to fellowship any man who advocates or preaches such false doctrine and that we keep such men out of our pulpits." We, as an Association in session at Lawyer Springs Church, November 5th, 1927, reaffirm our full endorsement of the above resolution. Our opposing brethren of the Bear Creek Association have reversed their position of 1923 and 1925, and opened their doors by correspondence and toleration and endorsement to the advocates of the above heresy, and therefore they have departed from the order of our Association and become guilty by toleration (Rom. 1:32). Also our opposing brethren have received in their churches legally excluded members on confession of faith, from Union Grove, Pleasant Grove and High Hill Churches, and they have recognized the legally excluded members from Lawyer Springs as a church in order, which is gross disorder and unBaptistic. We, the following churches: Lawyer Springs, Pleasant Grove, Watson, Union Grove, High Hill, High Ridge and Freedom, having stood for the original faith and practice of the Bear Creek Association and where it stood in 1923 and 1925 to the present, do declare ourselves to be the Original Bear Creek Primitive Baptist Association in line with nine-tenth of the Primitive Baptists of the United States. We do humbly pray that our erring brethren may see their sad mistakes in their departure by toleration and return to gospel order so that we can again worship God together as in days of yore."

ELDER O. C. MULLIS, Moderator,
H. M. BAUCOM, Clerk.

ARTICLES OF FAITH

Article 1. We believe in one living and true God, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost.

Art. 2. We believe in the man Jesus being the first of all God's creation and the pattern of all God's perfection in nature, providence, grace and glory, and in relative union with the divine word, and thus united with the whole Trinity.

Art. 3. We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain the only written revealed word of God, and are the perfect rule of faith and practice for God's church in her militant state while here on earth.

Art. 4. We believe in the doctrine of Election, that God chose His church in Christ Jesus before the world began.

Art. 5. We believe in all mankind's apostacy by transgression in Adam, the federal head.

Art. 6. We believe in the doctrine of original sin.

Art. 7. We believe in the impotency of man to recover himself from his fallen state by his own free will and ability.

Art. 8. We believe that sinners are justified freely by grace and before God by faith in Christ and his righteousness only.

Art. 9. We believe that God's elect or church shall be called, converted, regenerated and sanctified by the Holy Spirit in due time.

Art. 10. We believe that the saints shall persevere in grace and never really fall away.

Art. 11. We believe that baptism and the Lord's supper are ordinances of Christ's appointment and that believers alone are the subjects of baptism and the only proper communicants of the supper; that the mode of baptism is immersion, and that neither of the ordinances is to be altered or changed by the inventions or opinions of men.

Art. 12. We believe that no man as a minister has any right to the administration of any of the ordinances of the gospel except such as are sound in the faith of the gospel, regularly baptised, called of God and have come under the imposition of hands by a regular Presbytery.

Art. 13. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, both the just and unjust, and a general judgment.

Art. 14. We believe that the punishment of the wicked will be everlasting and the joys of the righteous eternal.

STATISTICAL TABLE

CHURCHES	PASTORS	CLERKS AND ADDRESSES	MESSENGERS	Rec'd by Exp. & Bapt.	Received by Letter	Confession of Faith	Dismissed by Letter	Excluded	Deceased	Membership	Contributions	Sunday Meeting
Lawyer Springs	J. R. Wilson	H. M. Baucom, Peachland, N. C.	Whole Church	1				13	2	47	$15.00	1
Pleasant Grove	W. F. Pruett	I. A. Helms, Marshville, N. C.	Elder J. F. Mills, T. A. Helms, W. B. Helms	10	2	2				40	7.50	2
Watson	O. C. Mullis	S. L. Mullis, Unionville, N. C.	Eld. O. C. Mullis, Troy Simpson, P. Helms	3		3	1	1		27	7.50	4
Union Grove	W. F. Pruett	Elijah Little, Unionville, N. C.	S. D. Outen, J. D. Hill, F. L. Baucom	11			1		1	66	14.00	2
High Hill	J. R. Wilson	Wm. Clontz, Unionville, N. C.	V. P. Helms, S. Edwards, G. W. Helms							35	9.45	1
High Ridge	O. C. Mullis	J. B. Medlin, Marshallville, N. C.	J. H. Ashcraft, B. Williams							9		3
Freedom		Jack Deese, Albermarle, N. C. Rt.1	Not Represented									

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Church History

By Elder Lee Hanks

Cloth Binding, single copy $1.50
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Old School Church Hymnal

1 dozen, Manilla Binding, $4.00; each 40 cents.
1 dozen Cloth Binding, $5.00; each 50 cents.

The Primitive Baptist $2.00
Advocate and Messenger $1.50
These are good papers.

Address Elder Lee Hanks
2 Edwin Place
Atlanta, Ga.

MINUTES

OF THE

NINETY-SIXTH ANNUAL SESSION

OF THE

Original Bear Creek Primitive Baptist Association

Held With Watson Church,
Union County, N. C.
August 24, 25 and 26, 1928.

OFFICERS

Elder O. C. Mullis, Moderator, Unionville, N. C.
P. L. Helms, Clerk, Unionville, N. C.

Next Session Will Convene With
High Hill Church,
Friday, Saturday and 3rd Sunday in September, 1929.

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ARTICLES OF FAITH

Article 1. We believe in one living and true God, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost.

Art. 2. We believe in the man Jesus being the first of all God's creation and the pattern of all God's perfection in nature, providence, grace and glory, and in relative union with the divine word, and thus united with the whole Trinity.

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Art. 13. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, both the just and unjust, and a general judgment.

Art. 14. We believe that the punishment of the wicked will be everlasting and the joys of the righteous eternal.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ORIGINAL BEAR CREEK ASSOCIATION, HELD WITH WATSON CHURCH, FRIDAY, SATURDAY AND 4TH SUNDAY IN AUGUST, 1928.

The introductory sermon was preached by Elder W. F. Pruette, text, Titus 2 : 11.

Intermission one hour.

After which the Brethren met in the house, and after praise and prayer by Elder J. F. Mills, the church went into conference by electing Elder O. C. Mullis Moderator, who called Elder P. J. Washburn to his assistance; and P. L. Helms Clerk, who called H. M. Baucom to assist him.

1. Invited all orderly Baptists to seats with us.

2. Called for letters from sister churches, which were handed in and their status noted.

From Pleasant Grove: L. L. Griffin, T. F. Mills, C. W. Mullis, Lonnie Mills and others.

Watson: whole church.

High Hill: W. M. Clontz, Van P. Helms, G. W. Helms, S. H. Edwards and others.

High Ridge: J. B. Medlin, Lonnie Thomas and others.

Lawyers Springs: E. C. Jones, W. A. Dry, C. P. Griffin, James T. Jones and others.

Union Grove: S. D. Outen, J. C. Baucom, T. F. Hill, F. L. Baucom and others.

Freedom: A. J. Deese, J. C. Miller and others.

3. Bro. W. E. Benton handed in a letter from Bethel church desiring membership in this Union, which on motion was unanimously agreed.

4. The following committees were appointed:

On preaching: The Clerk and Deacons of Watson church together with F. P. Deese and H. M. Baucom.

On Finance: P. L. Helms, Brady Mills, F. L. Baucom, H. M. Baucom, Lonnie Thomas, A. J. Deese and W. E. Benton and Calvin Mills.

5. On motion, Bro. J. T. Simpson was appointed to prepare a circular letter for this minutes.

6. On motion adjourned to Saturday A. M., 10 o'clock.

7. Met Saturday A. M., 10 o'clock, and after praise and prayer by Elder W. F. Pruette, proceeded to business as follows:

Circular letter was presented, read and adopted.

8. On motion it was agreed that we publish a statement in these minutes giving the reasons for our separation from our former Brethren, which statement was read and adopted.

9. On motion this Association agreed to hold its next session, D. V., with the church at High Hill on Friday, Saturday and 3rd Sunday in Sept. 1929. The pastor of High Hill is to preach the Introductory Sermon. On motion it was agreed to have one thousand of these minutes printed.

10. On motion it is agreed to return thanks to God, this church and the people of this vicinity for their hospitality during this meeting.

11. Order of preaching: Saturday A. M., Elder W. F. Pruette, Text Titus 2:11. Friday P. M., Elder L. J. Gresham, Text I John 1:13. Friday P. M., Elder P. J. Washburn, Text unknown. Friday P. M., Elder J. F. Mills, exhortation to Christian obedience. Saturday A. M., Elder L. J. Gresham, Text, Duet, As the rain cometh down from heaven, etc. Saturday P. M., Elder W. F. Pruette, Text, Heb., 8th chapter. Saturday P. M., Elder P. J. Washburn, Text, Rom. 8:7-8. Sunday A. M., Elder O. C. Mullis, Text, This is the work of God that ye believe on him, etc. Sunday A. M., Elder L. J. Gresham, Text unknown. Sunday A. M., Elder W. F. Pruette, Text, Matt. 22, What think ye of Christ? Sunday P. M., Elder C. H. White on Brotherly love. Sunday P. M., Elder P. J. Washburn, Text, Rom. 8:28.

ORDAINED MINISTERS

Elder J. F. Mills, Marshville, N. C., Rt. 1.
Elder H. Taylor, Monroe, N. C., Rt. 2.
Elder O. C. Mullis, Unionville, N. C., Rt. 2.
Elder C. H. White, Wadesboro, N. C.
Licentiate: Bro. James T. Jones.

CIRCULAR LETTER

Dear Brethren: As I am requested to write a circular letter, I feel incompetent to set forth those things, in order, that are most surely believed among us.

And, as we are just emerging from a sad division which was precipitated by the Staunton River Association changing an article of faith to make it conform to fatalism, which also caused what is known as the Danville church division, out of which grew several law suits for church property, "Dare any of you having a matter against an other go to law before the unjust and not before the saints." I Cor. 6:1.

The Lawyers Springs church law suit being instituted by the minority, 13 members, against the majority, 47 members, the minority having lined up with the advocates of absolutism, the one salvation, and the associational authority over the churches, some of whose witnesses, and members of the Staunton River Association swore in Court that in changing the article of faith that they were adopting the old original article of faith which the Staunton River Association held years ago; then the old original article being introduced in Court was found to be wholly unlike the one they substituted.

Sad indeed when men claiming to be Old Baptists will go into Court and swear contrary to recorded facts for no other purpose than to gain advantage over their Brethren.

Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me, and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin. Isa. 30:1.

Yet in the midst of all this we are happy in the thought that the sands of time cannot erase the history that is now being made of the Church of God, that the generations may see that our people have never brought a law suit against their brethren, nor have we ever declared non-fellowship without first laboring for peace. No greater legacy can we leave our children than to leave unto them the dear old church dressed in all her beautiful adornments of predestination, election, final preservation of the saints and other graces which belong unto her, which also has withstood the heats of summer and the cold stormy winters of persecution for more than 1900 years and will continue to be defended by a faithful few until her Husband calls her from this sinful world and makes her His glorious Bride without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

Brethren, let us be sober in all things, ever looking to God for every blessing, both for time and eternity, continuing in prayer and supplication to God.

May we never feel that God's predestination will fall unless we put forth our puny arm to prop it with the word absolute as did Uzziah when he put forth his hand to steady the ark of God and was struck dead.

And may we never feel so wise that we can tell the exact number of God's salvation, such as the eternal salvation, common salvation, your own salvation, etc., but may we feel in our hearts as did David when he said, My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day for I know not the numbers thereof. Psalms 71:15.

Let your moderation be known to all men, the Lord is at hand. Phil. 4:5. And the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally Brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Phil. 4:8.

Submitted in love,

J. T. SIMPSON.

STATEMENT OF THE ORIGINAL BEAR CREEK ASSOCIATION

To the Baptists in general and to our Correspondents in particular:

We desire to give a reason for our division in the Bear Creek Association, which is as follows:

There being a great cry from certain quarters that Elder J. R. Wilson was in disorder, High Hill, Lawyers Springs and Union Grove churches by

messengers investigated the so-called Wilson disorder, and found that the principal disorder that he was guilty of was having larger congregations to preach to and earnestly and effectively combatting the promulgation of fatalistic doctrines and practises. High Hill, Lawyers Springs and Union Grove, Watson, Pleasant Grove, High Ridge and other churches ratified the findings of this committee, and it became the work of the churches.

Those in the Bear Creek Association opposing Elder Wilson and the churches that had investigated his status as a Baptist and a minister, called a meeting at Smith's Grove church, Dec. 1926, and then and there sent out notices to the churches of the Bear Creek Association to withdraw fellowship from Elders Wilson and Pruette, and advised them to recognize the acts of the Spangler faction at Danville in their dealings with Elder Wilson and those who stood with him, notwithstanding High Hill, Lawyers Springs, Union Grove, Pleasant Grove and Watson sent letters to said meeting at Smith's Grove pleading with and begging any or all churches that had a grievance against any or all of these churches or their pastors to bring their grievance before said church or churches in their conference and they would give them an attentive hearing.

And Elders Wilson and Pruette insisted that those opposing them should investigate their standing at home before they sat in judgment upon them. Not one of Elders Wilson and Pruette's opposers in the bounds of the Bear Creek Association had ever visited Danville to get the true facts in the case, though some of our people had offered to pay the expenses of Elder Wilson's and Elder Pruette's leading opposers if they would go to Danville and investigate for themselves. But they refused to go.

Article 4 in the Call for the Smith's Grove meeting reads as follows: "That we do not invite no other person or persons to take part in any of the deliberations save the members of the Bear Creek Association." Elder W. C. Edwards acted as moderator and F. E. Honeycutt as clerk of this meeting.

This Smith's Grove meeting was to deal with Elders Wilson and Pruette and other preachers, "said to be in disorder."

Thus it is seen that the object in view was to try them in their absence as they were invited to stay away, and deprive them of serving the churches of their care in the bounds of the Bear Creek Association.

Whoever heard of ministers and churches being tried in their absence, and convicted and executed, before? Surely with the love of God in their hearts, they should have sought information instead of expelling it.

A criminal is not convicted without a fair trial, and if he is not able to provide counsel, the Court appoints it and he is on equal grounds with the State, though the accused has the benefits of all doubts. The State must prove his guilt. So different in this case.

After the churches now constituting the Original Bear Creek Association saw that their pleadings and entreaties had been ignored, and gospel discipline trampled underfoot, they withdrew from the disorders as set forth above and declared themselves the Original Bear Creek Association.

Bethel church withdrew from the Mill Branch Association for similar reasons.

We are unalterably opposed to a few messengers from the churches coming together in an associational conference and declaring non-fellowship for churches or other associations, and more especially so when not one iota of investigation or labor had been done.

This is all wrong, and though it is practised by many, it is an abomination before God, and should be before His people.

Oh! the heart aches and bitter tears that have been shed on account of this evil practise.

"Better abolish associations than to use them as a supreme Court and to spread trouble."—Hassell.

Discipline belongs alone to the churches and God's word should be the code for their government. May we abide therein.

STATISTICAL TABLE

CHURCHES	PASTORS	CLERKS AND ADDRESSES	MESSENGERS	Rec. by Exp. & Bapt.	Rec'd by Letter	Confession of Faith	Dismissed by Letter	Excluded	Deceased	In Fellowship	Contributions	Sunday Meetings
Pleasant Grove	W. F. Pruette	T. A. Helms, Marshville, N. C.	L. L. Griffin, I. F. Mills, C. W. Mullis	0	0	0	0	0	0	39	$19.25	2
Watson	O. C. Mullis	P. L. Helms, Unionville, N. C., Rt. 2	Whole Church	0	0	0	0	1	0	26	22.00	4
Union Grove	W. F. Pruette	F. L. Baucom, Monroe, N. C., Rt. 2	S. D. Outen, T. F. Hill, J. C. Baucom	0	0	0	0	0	1	65	22.50	2
High Hill	J. R. Wilson	W. M. Clontz, Unionville, N. C., Rt. 1	W. M. Clontz, Van P. Helms, G. W. Helms	2	0	0	0	0	1	37	23.00	1
High Ridge	O. C. Mullis		J. B. Medlin,									
Freedom	J. F. Mills	Lonnie Thomas, Marshville, N. C.	Lonnie Thomas	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	3.00	3
Bethel	L. J. Gresham	A. J. Deese, Albemarle, N. C., Rt. 6	A. J. Deese, J. C. Miller	0	0	2	0	0	0	4	1.50	--
Lawyers Springs	J. R. Wilson	O. J. Bell, Shallotte, S. C.	W. E. Benton, L. J. Gresham	2	0	0	0	0	0	17	1.50	1
		H. M. Baucom, Peachland, N. C.	E. C. Jones, C. P. Griffin, W. A. Dry	0	0	0	0	1	0	47	20.00	1
			TOTALS	4	0	2	0	2	2	244	$112.75	

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Funds Sent Up by Churches $112.75

Distributed to Ministers $72.75

For Printing Minutes and Postage

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